

(The) English
Establishments on the
Gold Coast in the 2nd
half of the 18th Cent.

By
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and the AGE of DISCOVERY

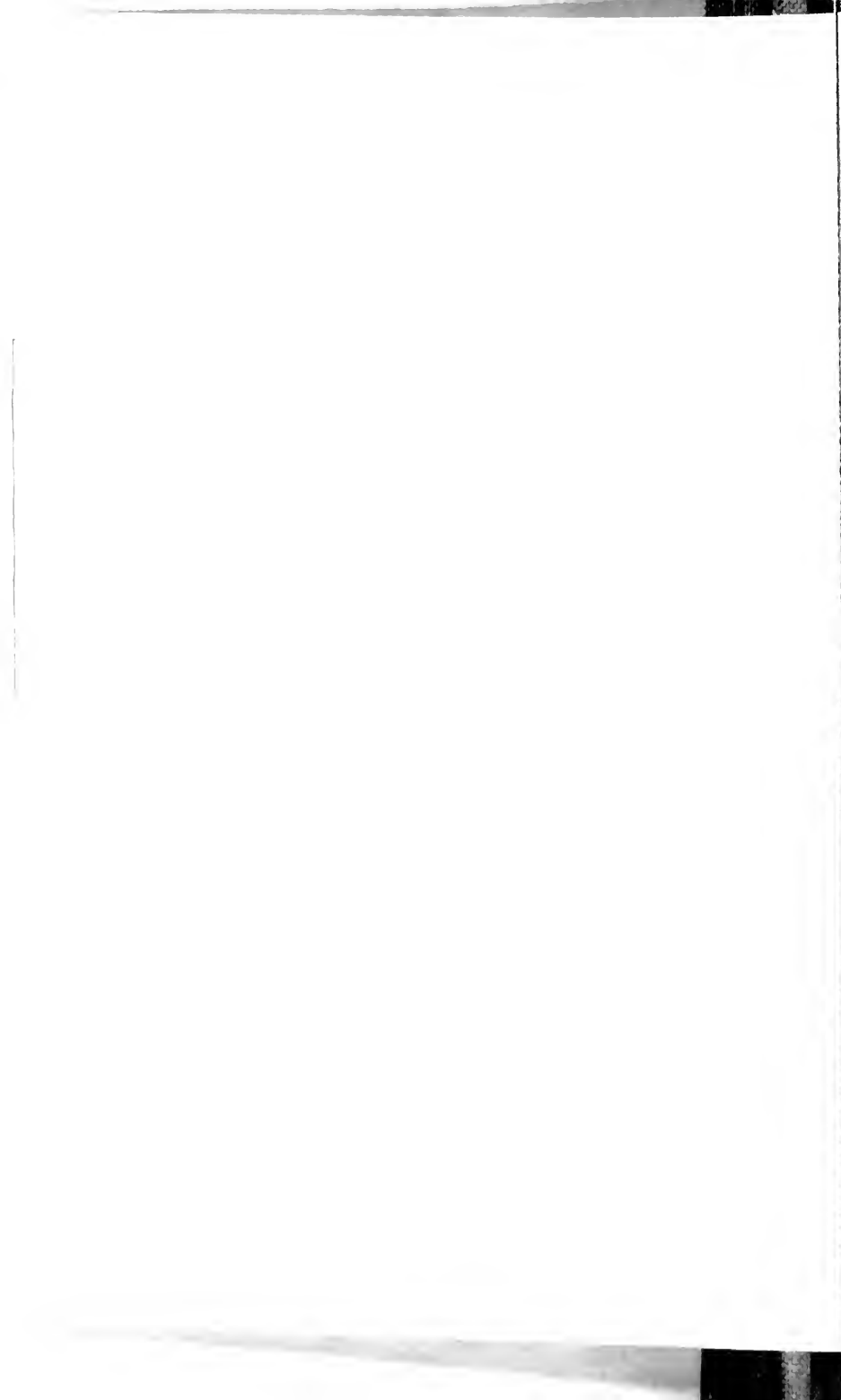


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THE ENGLISH ESTABLISHMENTS ON THE GOLD COAST IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

BY EVELINE C. MARTIN, M.A. (LOND.).

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AMONG the many unexplored fields in the history of the Outer Empire, the British settlements on the West African coast, until the last twenty years of the eighteenth century, have been the most neglected. The main course of English relations with that coast from earliest times to the end of the nineteenth century has been told in an admirable survey by Sir Charles Lucas,¹ and several histories of the Gold Coast exist. None of these sources, however, have provided more than an outline sketch of the English settlements in West Africa, and the method of government and organisation by which they were maintained in the eighteenth century has not been examined. The most recent history of the Gold Coast, published in 1910 by Mr. Walton Claridge,² is mainly occupied with nineteenth-century history, and no attempt is made by him to give anything but a cursory description of government in the previous century. Many other surveys of European progress in Africa have been written, but in all of them the treatment of the eighteenth century is slight. It is easy to account for this neglect. The story of the coast is bound up with the most discreditable of undertakings that mark the expansion of the Empire—the negro slave trade—and Lecky's brief account of the

¹ Lucas: *West Africa*.

² Claridge: *History of the Gold Coast*.

English relations with West Africa would not encourage research into a subject so humiliating to national pride. "All Africa was convulsed with civil wars and infested with bands of native slave dealers hunting down victims for the English trader whose blasting influence, like some malignant providence, extended over mighty regions where the face of a white man was never seen."¹

As far as this story has been told it is sordid, unrelieved by the interest that attaches to striking personalities or great movements, and it is not until the days of the adventures of Mungo Park, and of the attempts at Sierra Leone to found a colony for freed negroes, that West Africa becomes an attractive subject.

The neglect of the study of the English African establishments during the slave trade period, though a comprehensible neglect, has left a serious gap in the story of the overseas expansion of the Empire : what extent of territory was held by Europeans, what the nature of their establishments was, how they were governed, how the slave trade was carried on, into what relations the English entered with the natives, are all subjects on which our knowledge is of the slightest.

The question to which the following sketch attempts to give an answer is how the African settlements were governed in the second half of the eighteenth century. It is a period of drastic change in Empire government : in that time Great Britain suffered the breaking away of a most important part of the overseas territories, and during the same period the extension of power in India began to be accepted as a responsibility of the nation. While the American colonies were parting from Great Britain through a failure in government, and the trading organisation in India was being recognised as inadequate for the power it had acquired, the Gold Coast settlements show a type of government which continued throughout this period of change.

¹ Lecky : *England in the Eighteenth Century*, II, p. 245.

So free has the field for research been left in this subject that it has been necessary, for the purposes of the present sketch, to select arbitrary boundaries for the period to be investigated, and I have taken thirty-five years in the second half of the eighteenth century, 1750-85. There are reasons for these boundary dates: 1750 was the year in which, after the financial failures of the Royal African Company, Parliament passed a measure providing a new form of government for the African Settlements, under which scheme the Coast was governed till 1821; and 1785 is chosen as the concluding date, because it marks the beginning of the period of philanthropic efforts in the course of which the African Company became the object of attack of humanitarians, after which the history of the African settlements passed through a new phase, though the organisation of government remained the same.

The reports of debates, petitions and enquiries which preceded the change of government of 1750 all bear witness to the fact that the African settlements were unanimously considered to be of the greatest national value, though opinions differed as to the best means of providing for their upkeep.¹ The forts, in whose management such keen interest was taken, had little to recommend them as special objects of national attention. There were eight forts on the Gold Coast and one on the Gambia when the reorganisation of 1750 was carried through,² and these practically represented the extent of the British West African settlements at that time. Beyond their walls the English authority did not extend, and for the right to hold the forts regular payments of rent were made to native rulers. The actual area of territory for the government of which provision

¹ i. Papers presented to the Commons by the Board of Trade, 1749, *passim*; ii. Minute Book, Board of Trade, 1749, C.O. 391/57, *passim*; Entry Book, Board of Trade, 1749, C.O. 399/30, *passim*.

² 25 Geo. II, c. 40. Schedule I. From West to East these forts were: Dixcove, Succondee, Commenda, *Cape Coast Castle*, Tantumquerry, Winnebah, Accra, Whydah. Two were added to the list after 1750: Annanaboe, which was rebuilt 1753; Appolonia, which was built 1766.

had to be made was, therefore, not more than a few acres held by the English trading companies as tenants of a number of native rulers. While insignificant in extent the settlements were also in an undesirable situation as far as climate and surroundings were concerned. The forts were dotted along four hundred miles of Equatorial Africa known as the Gold Coast, and were built on a strip of plain land lying between a flat sandy shore on the sea side and on the land side dominated by low but densely wooded hills, which gave place further inland to higher ranges of mountains, making an effective barrier between the Europeans on the sea-coast and the unexplored interior. It was not an attractive situation in the middle of the eighteenth century, the African climate being recognised as fatal to the majority of Europeans who spent any time there. Nor had the Gold Coast the advantage of being free from the trouble of European rivalry. The English had as neighbours and rivals the Dutch, who also had forts along the Gold Coast interspersed between the English settlements.¹ The explanation of the keen interest taken in the management of these unhealthy and circumscribed forts lies in their value as giving English merchants points of connection with the African slave trade, about the value of which the commercial interest of the eighteenth century had no doubts. Malachi Postlethwayt sums up the views of his contemporaries on the subject when, after discussing the importance of various branches of commerce, he wrote: "How great is the importance of the trade to Africa, which is the first principle and foundation of all the rest, the mainspring of the machine which sets every wheel in motion . . . so that both for exports and imports, the improvement of our national revenue, the encouragement of industry at home, the supply of our colonies abroad, and the increase of our

¹ The arrangement of Dutch and English forts was, in 1760, as follows West to East, E., D., D., E., D., D., and E., D., E., D., D. (*Elmina*), E. (*Cape Coast Castle*), D., E., D., E., D., E., D., E., and D., E. (Bennet: *Africa According to the Sieur d'Anville*, 1760.)

navigation, the African trade is so very beneficial to Great Britain, so essentially necessary to the very being of her colonies, that without it neither could we flourish nor they long subsist.”¹

Therefore in the general interest of British trade and plantations the management of the African settlements was a matter of important concern. After prolonged discussions an Act for extending and improving the trade to Africa was passed in 1750.²

The aims expressed in this Act were to leave trade with Africa open to all who might wish to share in it, and at the same time to provide for the upkeep of the forts. By 1750 it was recognised that this expense would have to be borne mainly by the Government, but the organisation and management of the forts was to be entrusted to the merchants engaged in the trade, whose personal interest and knowledge should have qualified them for the work. At the same time, as the main burden of expense was to fall on the nation, the work of the merchant-body was to be carefully controlled by His Majesty's Government. The constitution which resulted from the attempt to unite these aims was neither Company government nor State government, neither State enterprise nor a private venture, but a composite erection, making a combined State and traders' organisation for the management of these valued possessions. The experiment is of especial interest, coming as it does before the experiments were made in India to provide for dual control of Company and State there.

By the Act of 1750 there was incorporated “The Company of Merchants trading to Africa,” in which the African forts and factories, formerly the property of the Royal African Company, were to be vested, and which was to undertake their management and upkeep. The new body was incorporated as a regulated Company, membership of which was to be open to all who paid a fine for

¹ *Treatise on Trade to Africa* : An African Merchant, 1772.

² 23 Geo. II, c. 31.

admission of 40s. To obviate the danger of a return to trade monopoly it was provided that it should not be legal for the Company "to trade to or from Africa in their corporate or joint capacity, or to have any joint or transferable stock."¹

The government of the Company was to be in the hands of a Committee of nine, annually elected by the freemen of each of the leading ports concerned in the trade—London, Bristol, and Liverpool. The functions of this Committee bear no comparison with the powers possessed by the Directors of the Joint Stock Companies. The Committee had no power to regulate in any way the methods or extent of the trade of the freemen, and were appointed solely to make the necessary arrangements for the government of the forts. This Committee, limited in its powers on one side by prohibitions against interference in trade affairs, was limited in its control of the forts by the supervisory authority of Parliament, the Board of Trade, and by its dependence on the Treasury and Admiralty. Parliamentary control was maintained by the Company's dependence for financial support on Government grants, as no provision was made in the incorporating Act for a regular income from which the expenses of fort upkeep could be met, and the prohibition against corporate trade prevented the Company from making an income for itself. Parliament therefore had a firm hold over the Company, and disapproval of any of the Committee's doings might have been met by a refusal of supply. No such drastic step was resorted to throughout the seventy-one years of the Company's life, and regular grants were made to meet the expenses of the ordinary management of the forts, varying from £10,000 to £20,000 a year.² Though the supplies were never cut off, the Company had each year to present a statement of their accounts, and make petition to secure the grant. The Company was, therefore, unable to embark on any schemes involving extra expenditure without express sanction, and the consideration

¹ 23 Geo. II, c. 31, sec. iv.

² C.J. vols. XXV. *seq.*

of the annual petition to Parliament provided critics of the Company with a regular opportunity for expressing their views. This opportunity was frequently taken, and the Company had throughout its existence to stand constant criticism. Of many debates on the African grant those of 1758, 1772 and 1777 were the most striking. That of 1758 ended with a triumphant verdict for the Company: "that it appears to this House that the Committee of the Company of Merchants trading to Africa have faithfully discharged the trust reposed in them,"¹ but in 1772 a bill was brought in to alter the method of election of the Committee,² and in 1777 the whole government of the Company in the twenty-seven years of its existence was thoroughly investigated and hotly debated in Parliament.³ In the course of these debates the work of the Committee was described with emphasis by their opponents. "The African Committee have acted contrary to the trust reposed in them . . . have misconstrued the import and spirit of the Act . . . they have perverted the true intent of the legislature, have acted diametrically contrary to the real interest of the nation and nearly annihilated your trade; neither can so destructive a system of folly and mismanagement be too soon abolished."⁴ Fortunately for the Committee they had in this debate Burke on their side, who maintained that far from being wasteful or mismanaging they were to be congratulated on having supported the forts at all on the inadequate funds allowed them, and he strongly opposed the suggestion that a new form of government for the African forts should be prepared, as he considered it likely only to "terminate in Government jobs and putting the trade upon a still worse footing than at present."⁵ The debate ended inconclusively, and the constitution of 1750 continued without any other serious attack. The readiness of Parliament to discuss the

¹ C.J., XXVIII, 1758, Feb. 8.

² *Parl. Hist.*, XVII, p. 503.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Mr. Temple Luttrell, p. 303.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Burke, pp. 313 and 315.

³ *Ibid.*, XIX, pp. 298 *seq.*

African management therefore provided some check on the Committee's action, as they had to be prepared to defend themselves at any time.

The control of Parliament over the Committee was supplemented by that of the Board of Trade, which was given a general supervisory authority over the Company by provisions in the incorporating act authorising the Board to dismiss any of the Company's officers or servants or members of the Committee found guilty of misbehaviour, and to call for information from the Committee on any matter.¹ The Board were not empowered to impose orders on the Company, but their powers of report and investigation gave them considerable control, and their advice at times was of a very compelling nature. In 1752 the Board expressed such strong disapproval of a project designed by the Governor at Cape Coast Castle for introducing cotton and indigo cultivation on the coast that the Committee, who had approved the project, had to contradict their own orders and censure their enterprising Governor.² Apart from a few cases of similar interference the Board showed little desire to intervene in the Committee's work, and in 1758, when a suggestion was made that the Board should be given direct control of the forts, they reported themselves "from multiplicity of business as well as other causes" quite unable to undertake the task.³ While holding a controlling authority over the Committee the Board did good service by means of their position as an office of information to which Secretaries of State appealed. The whole machinery of government was available for the support of the African settlements, as of any other part of the Empire, but to set the machinery in motion some further force was needed than a complaint from the Company that their rights had been invaded, and the recommendation of the

¹ 23 Geo. II, c. 31, sec. xxi. and xxiii.

² *Minutes*, Board of Trade, 1752, Feb. 14 (C.O. 391/59).

³ *Minutes*, Board of Trade, 1758, April 21 (C.O. 391/65).

Board of Trade gave the necessary weight to appeals or complaints.

In 1771 complaints from the African Coast of aggressions by the Dutch were transmitted by the Board of Trade to the Earl of Halifax, Secretary for the Southern Department,¹ through whom the matter was taken up and entrusted to the English Ambassador at the Hague, Sir Joseph Yorke. In the long diplomatic negotiations which followed Sir Joseph Yorke was instructed to inform the States General that it was His Majesty's intention "to support the honour and dignity of his Crown and protect his subjects in full enjoyment of their commercial rights and privileges."² While the Dutch raised countless obstructions and delays in these negotiations the Crown took an increasingly determined attitude, and the Ambassador was finally instructed to threaten the use of force if the traders' complaints were not satisfied. The delicate diplomatic situation at the Hague in 1774, however, prevented the threat from materialising, and the American war was the next scene in that quarrel.

Examples might be multiplied of incidents in which the Board of Trade acted as a guardian and supporter of the African Committee, rather than as a restraining or controlling authority, and the Committee readily acknowledged their appreciation of the Board's services,³ while, with one striking exception, there are but few records of serious difference of opinion between them.

While the Company of 1750 was limited in its actions by the Government, it had the counterbalancing advantage of being limited in its responsibility. Provided simply with a grant for keeping up the forts, the Committee had no means of maintaining a naval force, which, considering the situation and disposition of the forts, was essential to their protection. For this defence the Company had to depend

¹ Board of Trade to Halifax, 1771, May 22 (C.O. 391/78).

² S.P.F. Holland, 538. Suffolk to Yorke, 1773, Feb. 9.

³ Committee to Board of Trade, 1774, Jan. 12 (T70/69).

on His Majesty's Navy. Though in the incorporating act no definite provision was made for the maintenance of a regular naval force on the coast, the responsibility for such defence was recognised as lying in the Admiralty, by the clause which gave power of inspection to "such of His Majesty's Ships of War as shall be stationed or ordered to cruise within the limits aforesaid,"¹ and it became a recognised custom for the Admiralty to send vessels out to cruise along the coast each year. In time of war the strength of the naval force detailed for West African service depended on the plans of the general campaign. During the Seven Years' War there was no important action off the Gold Coast, as Pitt's attention was concentrated on the campaign in the Senegal region, but during the American War an ill-planned and worse-executed combined naval and military expedition was sent to the Coast under Lord George Germaine's orders for the offensive defence of the English settlements.² The results of the expedition were of very questionable advantage for the settlements, though they made a cheering paragraph in the *Annual Register*³ of 1782.

The navy was not only the force on which the Company relied for defence, it was also an important diplomatic agent on the Coast, where disputes between English and Dutch constantly raged. In one of Sir Joseph Yorke's despatches he expressed his opinion of its value: "I observe that whenever any of His Majesty's ships appeared on the scene all the disputes were adjusted and every point settled in all appearance to mutual satisfaction."⁴

As by the Act of 1750 the Company of Merchants was made responsible for the government of the forts, the only representatives of English authority on the coast were

¹ 23 Geo. II, c. 35, sec. xxx.

² Germaine to Mackenzie, 1781, May 30 (C.O. 268/3). Admiralty Secret Letters, 1781, May 2, to Capt. Shirley (Ad. 2/1340).

³ *Annual Register*, 1782, and Governor to Committee, 1782, June 6 (T70/33).

⁴ Yorke to Holderness, 1762, June 17 (C.O. 388/50).

servants of the Company, and when the Crown wished to enter into negotiations with the natives, the commanders of His Majesty's ships, and not the resident governor, were given the honour of representing the Crown. In 1752, when a treaty was concluded with the Fantees, the officers of H.M.S. *Glory* provided the necessary dignity and authority to the negotiations, and Captain Cockburn, the commanding officer, gave the natives the solemn assurance of the protection of the English Government.¹ Again when, after the American War, demands were made by the natives for payment for the part taken by them in attacking the Dutch, the settlement of the affair was entrusted to Captain Thomson, of H.M.S. *Grampus*, who distributed to the natives the compensation allowed by the Government.²

Though the navy is seldom mentioned in the Act of 1750, it was an important check on the irresponsibility of the Company's government in Africa, by providing a means of report on native affairs, on the condition of the forts and their management, on the relations of the English settlements with the Dutch, and on the views of the masters of trading vessels. The supervisory authority of the Board of Trade over the Committee of the Company in London was to some extent paralleled on the Coast by the relations of the navy to the Governor of the forts.

Subject to the limitations of these checks on its action, the Company was made guardian and governor of the African forts and responsible for providing for their organisation and upkeep. The governing functions of the Company, which were entrusted to the Committee, were those of appointing "governors, deputy-governors, or any other officers civil or military" for the forts, of making orders for the government of the forts and regulation of the officers

¹ *African Company's Papers*, Melvil to Committee, 1752, Oct. 30 (T70/29).

² *Certificate of Payment from Capt. Thompson*, 1786, Jan. 16 (C.O. 267/9).

and servants there, and of investing the money entrusted to them "for the sole use, preservation and improvement of the forts and settlements." ¹

The Coast Service, which was appointed by the Company of 1750, was closely modelled on the African establishment of the Royal African Company, and therefore, though there is a distinct break in the London control of the African settlements when the new Company was established, there is considerable continuity in the Coast government. The Committee carried out their duties of providing for the government of the forts by appointing a civil staff of writers, factors and chief agents under the presidency of a Governor, and a military force which was also under the Governor's orders. In appointing to the Coast service the Committee required little qualification except that candidates should be "from the middle class of life, young men of respectable connections, and very well educated," ² and the principle on which they arranged promotion in the service was that boys entering the service should begin at the bottom and work up from writer to factor, and factor to the command of a fort, then passing from fort to fort till the position of Governor was reached. The principle was sound in a service where nothing but hard experience of Coast life could qualify a man to meet the many emergencies which that life entailed. For a few appointments specially qualified persons had to be found; these were the positions of surgeons, accountant, surveyor and gardener, and even for these average ability and commonsense were found more valuable in the uncertain climate of West Africa than theoretical knowledge. Though the African service was said to be one universally disliked, the Committee had generally a waiting list of applicants, except for the military force, which was always difficult to fill.

In carrying out the second duty, that of making orders for the government of forts and garrisons, the Committee

¹ 23 Geo. II, c. 31, sec. v.

² *Report on African Forts*, 1816, Jan. 26.

made no attempt to draw up a comprehensive scheme of rules, but having provided the first Governor with instructions as to his duties they used these as the basis of their Coast code, adding to them in the voluminous despatches which were subsequently sent out. These instructions were mainly concerned with the financial side of the Governor's work, about which detailed orders were given. The Governor was also instructed to prevent encroachments by foreign powers on English claims, to give help to all British vessels, and to allow them free intercourse with the natives. All other duties were provided for in the comprehensive order, and "if circumstances shall arise which are not seen or provided for in these instructions, you are to conduct yourself therein according to the best of your Skill, Power and Judgment, having always to your View the Preservation of the British Property and Trade."¹

The government of the civil and military service on the Gold Coast was the Governor and a small Council, varying in composition and undefined in powers, which was responsible to the Committee for the order and management of the forts. In the period under discussion this body was of little importance, as the Committee kept control in their own hands, and the African Office in London, and not the Council Room at Cape Coast Castle, was the centre of government. The small Council is interesting as a link in the series of coast governments, but not, in the second half of the eighteenth century, as a body whose doings were of much importance.

While the duties of providing a coast establishment and drawing up rules for their government were the most important functions of the Committee, that to which they devoted most time and energy was the investment of the annual grant made by Parliament for the upkeep of the forts, and as on this work the actual maintenance of the forts and their garrisons depended it is worth noticing in

¹ *Instructions to Melvil* (T70/143). Minutes of the Committee, 1751, Apr. 17.

some detail. From the money granted by Parliament certain charges were deducted before the amount actually to be invested for Coast expenses was known. The charges deducted were the fees paid at the Exchequer amounting to between £300 and £400 on a £13,000 grant,¹ £1,200 allowed to the Committee for the expenses of management in England,² and £1,000 for freight and insurance, which left little more than three-quarters for the purpose for which the grant was intended. After the deduction of these charges the remainder was invested in stores, ammunition and materials for fort repair to be sent out to the Coast, to serve four main purposes: (1) to provide part of the food supply of the garrison; (2) to provide goods which could be issued as salaries to the Committee's officers and servants either for their own use, or which, by barter with the natives, they could exchange for native food and drink, or use for carrying on private trade; (3) to provide stores to be issued to the officers in charge of the forts for payment of rent and other charges, for issuing as presents to natives of importance, for payment of black labour, and for purchasing wood or other materials for repairing the forts; (4) to provide ammunition for the garrisons, and building materials which could not be got upon the Coast. For these purposes the sum invested was apportioned between three classes of supplies: "necessaries," covering food and clothing; "goods," merchandise for barter, and "stores," which included coal, iron, medicines and everything not in the first lists, about 80 per cent. being invested in goods, and 20 per cent. in stores and necessities together.³ The thoroughness with which the Committee carried out the selection of the ship's cargo was of vital importance to the well-being of the garrisons on the Coast. Not only had the food supply to be carefully inspected, but also a discriminating choice of commodities for barter was essential.

¹ Balance Sheets of the Committee, 1780 (T70/906).

² 23 Geo. II, c. 31, sec. xxiv., amended by 4 Geo. III, c. 20, sec. ii.

³ Invoices: 1757-68, *passim* (T70/927).

The market for the European goods and the source of supplies and labour in Africa was provided by the native population living round the English forts, and traders from the hinterland who came down to the coast to barter slaves for European merchandise. As the Committee could not judge of changes in native demand the selection of goods for barter was largely made up on the basis of invoices sent home by the Governor of Cape Coast Castle. The items most largely in demand were rum and brandy, English woollen goods, English or East India cotton materials, fire-arms and gunpowder. The days when native commodities or slaves could be purchased for gaudy trifles were over by the eighteenth century, and in addition to changes in native taste the value of supplies was always liable to be affected by the number of vessels on the coast. West India rum, at one time a popular and profitable commodity, was in 1773 "a perfect drug on the coast,"¹ and the Committee sending out goods in 1774 wrote to the Governor that they had at his "very earnest request wholly omitted the article of rum,"² yet the next year an officer wrote to a correspondent in England: "I would by all manner of means advise West India rum and English brandy to be sent out, and that in large quantities."³ The reason for the rapid fluctuation in demand was that the natives preferred American to West India rum, and while American was plentiful in 1773 there was no market for West Indian, but when troubles in America checked that trade the less popular brand was accepted as a *faute de mieux*. In the selection of cotton and woollen goods care and discrimination was necessary to secure the kind most in accordance with native fashions. In 1773 an officer in the service wrote to a European correspondent that particular attention must be paid to the pattern and quality of the chintz sent out, as on those points depended its value.⁴

¹ Miles to Bourke, 1773, Jan. 31 (T70/1402).

² Committee to Governor, 1774, Dec. 5 (T70/69).

³ Miles to Shoolbred, 1775, Aug. 18 (T70/1482).

⁴ Miles to Bourke, 1779, Sept. 15 (T70/1483).

Such distinct native taste, combined with the inevitable fluctuations of trade, made the work of the Committee in drawing up their lists of contracts an undertaking of much greater importance than would appear at first sight, as an error in discrimination might seriously reduce the fort income. In the choice of food supplies the continual difficulty was to secure that what was sent out should be sound when it reached Africa. The provisions generally sent out were beef, pork, bread, butter, cheese and flour. The butter was often uneatable, the bread mouldy, leakages and breakages were a regular complaint, and various experiments in different forms of packing were made to secure better results. Complaints were the normal result of the arrival of supplies, and when in 1774 the Governor and Council expressed approval of the stores the Committee were greatly gratified.¹ The stores list was the most varied part of the cargo, as besides the annual supply of medicines, brick, stone and deal had to be sent out for fort repairs, seeds for the gardens, paint and other miscellaneous supplies.

Having drawn up lists of the supplies to be sent out the Committee had to charter a vessel to carry their stores, as they owned no fleet ; and to despatch this vessel laden with stores, recruits for the services and carrying orders for the Governor and Council was the main reason for the existence of the Committee. In addition they had to keep the Board of Trade informed on African affairs, complaints of individual traders against the Coast government, and prepare and present to the House an annual statement of accounts and petition for supplies. This clerical side of the work was very largely done by their Secretary, and while the Committee was annually elected, and no member might sit for more than three years consecutively,² continuity was provided by the Secretary. Though the Secretary was annually appointed it became the practice

¹ Committee to Governor, 1774, Dec. 8 (T70/69).

² 23 Geo. II, c. 31, clause xi.

to re-elect him, and between 1750 and 1785 only four secretaries were appointed, one of whom held office for sixteen years.¹

As the object of this essay is to show how the English Gold Coast establishments were governed in the second half of the eighteenth century, the main discussion has centred round the powers in England in whose hands the reins of government lay. The duties of the Governor and Council on the Coast was that of maintaining the British flag behind the walls of partially dilapidated forts. The most stringent orders were sent to them that they should avoid hostilities with natives or with the Dutch, and that they should refrain from interfering in any way with the English traders who came out. Neither relations with the native powers, nor with the representative of the Dutch East India Company, were controlled by the views of the Coast Council, who had to take their orders on these subjects from London. The powerlessness of this Coast government is its main claim to interest. The Governor and Council at Cape Coast Castle were the only resident body on the Coast representing British authority, and their authority did not extend beyond the servants employed by the Committee, though there was a small population of resident English traders on the coast. Over these traders the Government and Council had no authority, as was emphatically reiterated by the Committee. "You neither have nor do we want you to have any control over free traders. It is your duty to assist, not to direct, much less to restrain or cramp them in their dealings."² This absence of power to direct the free traders frequently made it impossible for the Council to carry out the Committee's orders, and increased the difficulties in the way of remaining on good terms with the natives. When free traders who had abused and cheated the natives sailed from the coast it was left to the forts to

¹ The Secretaries were: William Hollier, 1750-1753; Samuel Poirier, 1754-1770; Richard Camplin, 1771-1777; T. Rutherford, 1778-1787.

² Committee to Council, 1782, Jan. 26 (T70/69).

bear the brunt of native revenge, and patch up good relations again. The result of the weakness of the Governor's position was friction and quarrelling among the English population on the Coast, in which the natives learned to profit and to play off one party against another, and the resident representatives of British authority were looked upon with neither fear nor respect by the neighbouring native tribes. The problem of living in safety and peace in West Africa was complicated by the numbers of different native tribes who claimed authority along the coast. Bosman, writing at the end of the seventeenth century, stated that there were eleven native countries along the Gold Coast, seven of which were kingdoms and the remainder "seem to approach nearer to commonwealths,"¹ and eighteenth century maps show these divisions.² The origin and division of the Gold Coast tribes and their relation to one another are still matters of conjecture.³ The vital fact to the eighteenth century Governors was that there were a large number of native authorities who owned no overlord, with whom the English might make a comprehensive agreement, and with all of whom they had to keep on friendly terms. For almost each separate fort different native rulers had to be paid rent, and given large annual *douceurs* to ensure their friendship. Payments to natives made up more than half the annual expenses of the fort service,⁴ and when the Committee in London protested against the extent of these payments and required that they should be reduced, the Governor and Council stubbornly refused and justified their disobedience on the grounds that "owing to the weakness of the Company's position it is necessary to keep black men of power in our pay that we may live at peace with the natives who would otherwise molest us, knowing that we have not sufficient power to protect ourselves."⁵

¹ Bosman, *Description of the Coasts of Guinea*, Letter 1.

² Bennet: *Africa According to the Sieur d'Anville*, 1760.

³ Migeod: *Journal of the African Society*, Jan., 1920.

⁴ Abstract of C.C.C. Day-Books, 1752 (T70/1008).

⁵ *Minutes of Council*, 1781, Oct. 20 (T70/152).

The main efforts of the coast officers being directed towards attempts to secure their own position and keep trade open, their attitude to quarrels among the natives was in general one of non-intervention, unless considerable benefit to the English could be proved to result. The Committee's instructions were that every effort must be made to keep the peace, "Let it be your constant endeavour to promote peace and good harmony amongst the natives,"¹ as native quarrels ruined trade. The whole subject of English relations with the natives at this time is one on which the Company's records throw interesting light, but it demands much fuller treatment than is possible in this short sketch. The development in native affairs of the period which is of greatest importance is the growth of the power of the Ashantees, who in 1750 had been an inland power lying behind the coast territory. Their authority was gradually extended, and the rumours of an Ashantee descent on the coast gave uneasiness to the English Governor and Council from 1768 onwards,² though the actual descent did not take place till the beginning of the nineteenth century.

While the Ashantee menace was the most important native affair in which the English took active interest, they were also involved in lesser disputes from time to time, such as quarrels between factions in the native village at Cape Coast Castle.³ These disturbances were generally settled by palavers in which, by liberal expenditure of liquor, agreement was often reached. The item "Palavers" in the Council's accounts shows that what influence was derived from the position of arbiter was paid for in brandy and tobacco, and the Committee, in the interests of economy, constantly urged caution in interfering in native affairs, "as we are sensible the interposition of Europeans in the quarrels of natives generally widens the breach, as both

¹ Committee to Governor, 1774, Dec. 5 (T70/69).

² *Minutes*, Board of Trade, 1768, April 26 (C.O. 391/75).

³ Letter of Govr. Roberts, 1780, Sept. 21 (T70/1478).

parties rise in their demands expecting all charges to be paid as usual by the mediator.”¹

The weak position which the English held in relation to the natives is shown in the frequent accounts of insults to which the Company's officers and servants were subject at the hands of turbulent natives. Outside the actual walls of the forts the Governor's position was very perilous if he had incurred native displeasure, and Minutes and Letter Books are full of reports of physical violence offered to unpopular officers. There are several accounts of officers being kidnapped by the natives and being stripped and beaten before they were allowed to return to the forts.²

The weakness of the English position and their dependence on native goodwill was fully recognised by the Committee as well as by the officers on the Coast. In 1778 in a letter to the Colonial Secretary, the Committee explained that the security of their position on the Coast depended “more on the attachment of the slaves than on their feeble force in civil and military servants,”³ and complaints from the Coast were constantly sent to the Committee as to the insolence of the natives reaching “that pitch of arrogance it is scarcely bearable.”⁴

The accounts of the life within the African service which may be found in the private letters preserved among the Company's records, as well as in the public documents, show it to have been a rough, coarse life. Though the Governor and Council were carefully restricted in their public work, they were given an unfortunately free hand in their treatment of subordinates and control of their forts, and the life of a new recruit to the African service was a hard apprenticeship. Blows and curses were a regular part of his education, his pay was issued in any goods which his superiors did not want, and unless he possessed both a tough

¹ Committee to Governor, 1781, Jan. 20 (T70/69).

² Governor to Committee, 1786, Jan. 8 (Governor of Tantomquerry), *ibid.*, 1782, 28th Sept. (Capt. Mackenzie).

³ Committee to Knox, 1778, Sept. 23 (T70/69).

⁴ Roberts to Bartlett, 1780, June 5 (T70/1478).

frame and a stout heart, one to stand against the climate and the other to keep him from despair, his days in Africa were likely to be both short and miserable. The attraction of the Service was its danger : the same deadly climate which, according to contemporary accounts, swept off over 90 per cent. of those who went out to the Coast,¹ left the way clear for survivors to rapid promotion to the coveted position of officer in charge of a fort. That advance was valued not for salary or glory of the office, but because it gave unrivalled opportunities for private trade, and trade was the end-all and be-all of existence on the Coast.

The paradox of the government of the West African forts in the period was that the further from the coast the greater was the interest taken in it. The West Indian planters never failed in keeping a watchful eye on the progress of the African settlements and the aggression of possible rivals. The Governor and Council on the coast were apathetic on that subject to an extent only to be explained by the inadequate powers of government allowed to them, and by the system which made the right to private trade a recognised part of the remuneration of the ill-paid officers in the Service. Except for a few obscure governors, such as Thomas Melvil and John Hippisley, who saw beyond the walls of the forts, the immediate problem of making peace between quarrelsome officers, distributing and accounting for the annual supplies and keeping quiet the most turbulent natives by bribery, was all that the Coast government attempted to do. Time and energy were as a general rule devoted to the private trade which was to provide those who engaged in it with means for retiring from the Service as soon as fortune allowed.

One of the ablest men in the Service, not one of the best Governors, Governor Richard Miles, wrote to a friend that the office of Governor-General was a burden which inconveniently interfered with private trade, and he considered it better to be in charge of one of the minor forts,

¹ Miles to Bourke, 1773, Jan. 31 (T70/1482).

where there were fewer official interruptions to his own business.¹

Governor Melvil, who attempted to carry out his duties with some regard for the future expansion of the settlement, was reprimanded for his activities,² which were thought to be prejudicial to the general commercial system of the Empire.

The combination of the two principles ruling the Coast government, the limitation of authority to the point of discouraging all enterprise, and the encouragement of private trade among the officers, would have ruined the efficiency of any service, and the African officers were not superhuman. The responsibility for the government of the Gold Coast during this period does not, therefore, fall on the shoulders of the Governor and Council at Cape Coast Castle, but on the Committee in London, the Board of Trade, and His Majesty's Government, whose predominating influence and control over Coast affairs has been described earlier in the essay.

Conclusions as to the exact place in the history of the Empire constitution which this experiment in dependency government should occupy must be left for fuller study. The present essay has attempted to show how that experiment was put into practice, and has not dealt with the wider question of its failure or success. To make such an estimate, detailed comparison with the government of other outlying parts of the Empire at the same period would be necessary, as would comparison with the efforts of the Dutch and French in West Africa. Until such an examination can be made the government of the "Company of Merchants trading to Africa" may be looked upon either as a monopoly in the hands of a set of base, designing men using national grants for their individual benefit, as a large section of the African traders maintained,³ or, as

¹ Letter Book, Governor Miles, 1781 (T70/1483).

² *Board of Trade Minutes*, 1752, 14th Feb. (C.O. 391/59).

³ *Parl. Hist.*, XIX, pp. 298 *seq.*

Burke suggested, a body of men trying manfully to carry out a difficult task for the national good on insufficient means. One or two facts are patent. The Gold Coast forts were still British in 1785, and the African trade was still an important branch of national commerce. What greater development might have taken place under some other system of government is a matter for speculation.

NOTE ON MANUSCRIPT SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. ORIGINAL SOURCES

THERE is no lack of material for an account of the English Gold Coast establishments in the second half of the eighteenth century, and the problem of the writer has been one of selection rather than of searching for sources.

I. PAPERS OF THE COMPANY OF MERCHANTS TRADING TO AFRICA.

First in importance are the Papers of the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa. These records, which passed into the custody of the Treasury in 1821, when the Company was divested of its property on the coast,¹ were deposited in the Public Record Office in 1846,² where they are catalogued among the Treasury Papers. The scope of these records has been indicated by Mr. Hilary Jenkinson of the Public Record Office, in a paper read to the Royal Historical Society in 1912,³ and Professor Newton of King's College, London, made a report on them to the Carnegie Institute⁴; but the papers from 1750 have been practically unused.⁵ For the most recent history of the Gold Coast, that published in 1915 by Mr. Walton Claridge, they have not been consulted.

Being the papers produced by the Company of Merchants in course of their activities as responsible for the management of the African forts, these records are the main source of information as to the organisation of the African establishments, and are of considerable importance for the history of events on the coast. They consist of the usual classes of records produced by organisations of the Company type: minutes, letters (in and out), accounts and miscellanea. As the Company had its centre

¹ *Report of Dep. Keeper of Public Records*, VII, App. II, p. 21.

² *Ibid.*, VIII, App. I, p. 27.

³ *Transactions R. Hist. Soc.*, Ser. III, vol. vi.

⁴ Attached to D.Lit. Thesis, 1914.

⁵ Miss Hotblack refers to them in *Chatham's Colonial Policy*.

in London and a subordinate government on the coast, the records divide naturally into those emanating from, or addressed to, the Committee in London, and those produced in Africa. The London papers consist chiefly of minutes, letter books and accounts, all of which are of the greatest importance for the organisation of the Company. The minutes contain the Committee's decisions on all matters of policy; the out-letter books contain the Committee's despatches to the coast, and letters to a widely varied number of correspondents in England, and the in-letter books are copies of letters received from Africa. In addition the Company kept various registers: there is a register of the names and addresses of those admitted to the freedom of the Company, and there are registers of the appointment and subsequent careers of the officers and servants in the Company's employment. The accounts of the Committee show the method in which the allowance for a fort maintenance was invested in England, and invoice books show the details of the supplies sent out.

All the London records are of very great value for the question of the internal management of the Company. The papers produced on the coast also consist of minutes and accounts, the coast letters being among the London records. The minutes of the Council at Cape Coast Castle are not, for coast affairs, of so great value as the letters sent home, as they tended, especially towards the end of the century, to be occupied more with small matters of promotions and quarrels in the Service than with decisions on questions of importance. Their greatest importance is in the light they throw on life in the Service. Of all the records produced on the coast the accounts are by far the most valuable, showing the basis of the English position on the coast, and being the most trustworthy guide for questions of relations with the natives. Where the accounts are of least value is for relations with other European Powers. The coast accounts for the period consist of between 400 and 500 volumes, being made up of:

Journals of Cape Coast Castle	2 volumes a year.
Ledgers of Cape Coast Castle	2 " "
Garrison Ledgers of Cape Coast Castle	2 " "
Day Books of Cape Coast Castle	2 " "
Day Books of nine out-forts	the number varying from 5 to 12 for each fort for the period.

Day Books of Gunner and Surveyor.

And in addition there are miscellaneous volumes, as, for example, the Day Books of the Dutch forts captured in 1782 and held till the Peace of Versailles. The accounts have not been used throughout, but where used have been found not only valuable sources of information, but also the most interesting of the Coast records. The Day Books are of especial interest, as they contain the receipts and payments made by the officers in charge of the forts each day in order of occurrence, so that they may be almost taken to be the fort diaries.

In addition to the minutes, letter books and accounts of Committee and Council there is a large number of unbound papers, seventy bundles, of the period. The bundles are arranged chronologically, but the contents are practically unsorted, and are very miscellaneous. The series has not been used throughout, but the bundles examined consist of three main classes of contents: (1) the Coast despatches and reports to the Committee; (2) the bills for goods furnished to the Committee, receipts, cheques, etc.; (3) original correspondence, appeals for employment, offers of contracts to supply goods, complaints from merchants, and also a number of private letters of officers in the Company's pay. A number of these papers are damaged by damp, and quite illegible. For the purpose of the present sketch the most essential part of the information they contain is provided in more accessible form by the letter-books, minutes and account books.

With so large a fund of unused, and in some parts unexplored, material bearing directly upon the subject, it has been impossible to attempt either to examine it exhaustively, or to consult many of the other sources from which valuable information might be drawn. London, though the head-quarters of the Company, was only one of three ports responsible jointly for the management of the Settlements, and the records of the merchants in Bristol and Liverpool would be valuable. The possibilities of such material are indicated by a volume of papers of African merchants of Bristol which was deposited in the British Museum through the kind assistance of Dr. C. A. J. Skeel who discovered it in the Bristol Public Library.

The other sources which have been used will be taken in the order of the directness of their bearing on Gold Coast affairs, thus working from the lower authorities to the higher.

Papers of the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa.

[The Public Record Office reference number for all the following is T70.]

A. OF THE COMMITTEE IN LONDON.

	<i>Years.</i>	<i>Volumes.</i>	
<i>Minutes</i>	1750-1813	143-149	Missing for years 1763-1779.
<i>Letter Books :</i>			
<i>In</i>	1750-1813	29-35	} Volume 29 contains both In and Out letters.
<i>Out</i>	1750-1815	29, 69-73	
<i>Staff Registers</i> . . .	1750-1815	1454-1456	
<i>Registers of Freemen</i>	1750-1819	1508-1510	
<i>Accounts :</i>			
<i>Balance Sheets</i> . .	1751-1819	905-908	
<i>Ledgers : "Forts and Settlements"</i>	1750-1784	633-634	
<i>Journals</i>	1750-1792	357-359	
<i>Pass Books</i> . . .	1750-1819	242	
<i>Invoice Books</i> . .	1757-1786	927-929	

B. OF GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL ON THE COAST.

	<i>Years.</i>	<i>Volumes.</i>	
<i>Minutes</i>	1750-1818	151-154	Missing for years 1751-1769.
<i>Letter Books</i> . . .	<i>Vide supra.</i>		
<i>Accounts :</i>			
<i>Ledgers C.C.C.</i> . .	1750-1807	708-808	Not used throughout. Following volumes consulted : 708, 762, 763, 764.
<i>Journals C.C.C.</i> . .	1751-1807	425-451	Used, 425, 426, 478, 479, 480.
<i>Garrison Ledgers C.C.C.</i>	1751-1807	1276-1391	Used, 1347, 1351.
<i>Day Books C.C.C.</i>	1750-1807	1007-1092	Used, 1045, 1046, 1008.
Accra, Tantum-querry, Annamaboe, Wydah, Apollonia, Winnebah, Commenda, Apam, Dixecove, Berracoe, Succondee	1750-1807	947-1172	<i>Ibid.</i> , 977, 999, 1120, 1131, 1140, 1160, 1182.
<i>Pay Bills, African Company.</i> . . .	1785-1791	1462	
<i>Report on Accounts</i>	1770-1776	155	
<i>Private Papers of Richard Miles :</i>			
<i>Letter Books</i>	1773-1781	1479-1483	
<i>Accounts</i>	1772-1777	1264-1265	

C. UNBOUND PAPERS.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Volumes.</i>	
1770-1808	1515-1587	The following have been used : 1515, 1516, 1531, 1532, 1541, 1542, 1543, 1547, 1548, 1554, 1560, 1561, 1562, 1565, 1566, 1571, 1576.

Records of Trading Merchants.

BRISTOL TRADERS' PAPERS.

Letters of Isaac Hillhouse & Partners—in Bristol Public Library. Volume 1713 to 1895.
 Sundry Letters on Slave Trade, a list of the freemen of the Company, etc.

2. BOARD OF TRADE PAPERS.

As the records of the body responsible for considering and advising the Government on matters concerning trade and plantations, the Board of Trade papers are next in importance to the Company's records for questions as to the organisation of the forts, and throw light on the internal management of the Company, the relations of its Committee to the Coast Council, of the Committee to the traders, and of the coast officers to the Dutch and French. They also are valuable for a question on which the Company's records are inadequate: the African settlements in relation to the other English trading posts and plantations.

As the Board had a "general supervisory authority" over the Company, its records are important throughout the period. The minutes and letter books of the Board have been consulted throughout the period, and the original correspondence has been referred to for points of special interest. When in 1782 the Board was dissolved, and African affairs were directly in the hands of the Privy Council, the place of the Board of Trade Minutes is taken by the Privy Council Registers, where a discussion of the internal management of the Company may be found in 1783.¹

When in 1784 the need for a special board for consideration of trade and plantation affairs was again recognised by the appointment of a Committee of Council for Trade and Foreign Plantation, a series of minutes concerned solely with matters of

¹ Reg. P.C., 1783, July 18 and Aug. 15.

trade and the colonies again began. These records are valuable throughout for the same points as those of the preceding Board of Trade.

In the Public Record Office the papers of the Board of Trade and the Committees for Trade and Plantations which concern African affairs are in two classes, partly catalogued as a section of the "Colonial Office" records, and partly in a separate list as "Board of Trade" papers. The main distinction is that the records of the Board which was dissolved in 1782 are in the "Colonial Office" list, and the records of the Committees from 1782 onwards are in the "Board of Trade" list, but the distinction does not hold entirely, as a series of correspondence on African affairs in the Board of Trade list (B.T.6 Miscellanea) belongs partly to the earlier period.

Some of the Board of Trade papers on African affairs are also among the Additional Manuscripts in the British Museum.

BOARD OF TRADE PAPERS.

IN PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.

A. In Colonial Office List as "Board of Trade (Commercial)."

		Class.	Volume Numbers.
<i>Minutes.</i>	1750-1782	C.O. 391	57-89
<i>Letter Books :</i>			
<i>Outward</i>	1750-1782	C.O. 389	30-34, 38 & 39 49-53
<i>Original Correspondence</i>	1750-1782	C.O. 388	45-74
	1753-1756	C.O. 69	1
			Letters between Dutch and English on the Coast.

B. In Board of Trade List.

Series containing :

<i>Minutes</i>	1784-1790	B.T. 5	1-5
	1788 addit.	„ 6	12
<i>Letter Books :</i>			
<i>Outward</i>	1786-1790	„ 3	1-3
<i>In Letters</i> . . .	1791	„ 1	1
"Board of Trade Miscellanea"			
<i>Correspondence</i> . .	1771-1793	„ 6	1-8
<i>Correspondence</i> . .	1780-1784	„ 6	14
<i>Evidence on Slave Trade</i>	1788	„ 6	9-11

IN BRITISH MUSEUM.

Additional MSS. 14034 and 14035.

1. "Papers relating to the West Indies, America, Africa and the Canaries, 1696-1786."

Both in and out letters contain draft of report to Commons on condition and management of the African Trade.

2. "Papers of the Board of Trade and Plantations, 1710-1781." Correspondence, chiefly out. Drafts of letters to Committee of the Company of Merchants, draft of Memorials to the King, one 1767 on Appolonia. Also to Earl of Shelburne on Count Welderen's memorial.

PRINTED.

Of the Board of Trade Papers there are three reports for the period which have been printed:

- | | | |
|-------|---|---|
| 1750. | Papers laid before the Commons by the Board of Trade on Trade to Africa | } 8223-c.-4 [47] Brit. Mus. |
| 1777. | Return of Commissioners for Trade and Plantations on African Trade | } Parliamentary Papers, Accounts and Papers, Vol. 59. |
| 1789. | Report on Trade to Africa | 524, K. 14, Brit. Mus. |

3. PRIVY COUNCIL RECORDS.

The Privy Council Records do not provide much information on Gold Coast affairs which is not in the Board of Trade papers, as the Council's chief function in regard to trade was that of making Orders in Council to direct the Board of Trade to collect information. Between 1782 and 1784 in the gap in the Board of Trade organisation the Privy Council Register contains references to the Company's accounts.

In the erection of the province of Senegambia in 1765 the Register of the Council and the Unbound Papers show the Council's consideration of the project, and the orders bringing the province into being.

IN PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------|---|
| Reg. P.C. 103. | 1752-1753 | May 28, 1752. Order in Council approving building of Annamaboe. |
| " " 111. | 1764-1766 | 1765. Government for Senegambia Province arranged. |
| " " 128. | 1782-1783 | 1783. July Committee to make financial report. |
| " " 129. | 1784 | March 5. Order for Committee for Trade and Plantations. |
| " " 131. | 1786 | July 23. New Order for Do. |
| P.C. 1. 59 | 1765 | May 31. Board of Trade Representation on Senegambia. |

Calendared Records.

The series "Act of the Privy Council (Colonial)" which has been carried to 1783 is of little value for African affairs. The most important action of the Privy Council in relation to African affairs in the period, the establishment of a form of Government in the province of Senegambia, finds no place in the calendar.

4. CORRESPONDENCE OF HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE.

From the Board of Trade information as to African affairs passed to the principal Secretaries of State, and a series of records is reached when Gold Coast affairs are placed in relation to the general government of the realm. The correspondence addressed to the principal Secretaries of State on African affairs is collected in volumes which have been catalogued in the light of nineteenth-century history among the Colonial Office papers under the title of "Sierra Leone," though for the period 1750 to the Peace of Versailles, Sierra Leone is not mentioned in the correspondence. The series contains letters on African affairs addressed to either of the principal Secretaries of State (in 1754 letters addressed to Sir Thomas Robinson [Southern Department], in 1758 to Pitt [Southern], in 1776 to Lord Weymouth [Northern], in 1784 to Lord Sydney [Home]). In this series information as to the arrangements for the African campaigns of 1757 and 1782 may be found, and the steps leading to diplomatic action taken by the Crown on behalf of the African Committee are shown as the bringing of diplomatic pressure to bear on the Hague in 1772. This correspondence is therefore of great importance for the question of the place of the African settlements as a national interest.

In addition to the papers of the Secretaries of State which are in the Public Record Office, some of the collections among the Additional MSS. in the British Museum contain papers concerning African affairs. The papers of Thomas Pelham Holles, Duke of Newcastle, and those of the Yorke family, have occasional reference to African matters, and among the Egerton MSS. are two volumes of papers which were delivered to the Secretary "of the African and American Department" in 1779.

The papers of the Earl of Shelburne, which were reported on in the Third and Fifth Reports of the Historical Manuscripts

Commission, contain information as to the official attitude towards African affairs in the negotiations preliminary to the Peace of Versailles, and there is also in this collection a volume marked *Minutes of African Affairs* of which unfortunately no detailed table of contents is given.

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF
STATE (PLANTATION DEPARTMENT).

IN PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.

		<i>Class.</i>	<i>Volume Number.</i>
Colonial Office List: " <i>Sierra Leone</i> ."			
<i>Original Correspondence</i> :	1750-1804	C.O. 267	5-22
		Volume 11 is a bundle of reports and plans of the forts made by a Surveyor of the Ordnance Board.	
<i>Letter Books.</i>			
Instructions, etc.	1750-1813	C.O. 268	2-6

IN BRITISH MUSEUM.

Additional MSS.

<i>Newcastle Papers</i>	33053		
<i>Hardwicke Papers</i>	35906		
<i>Egerton MSS.</i>			
<i>Papers on trade to Africa</i>	1776	1162-A. & B.	

PRINTED.

Historical MSS. Commission.

Lansdowne MSS.	Report V.	Appendix, p. 243.
" "	" "	p. 248.

5. STATE PAPERS FOREIGN.

After the African correspondence of the Secretaries of State the correspondence of the Ambassador at the Hague is valuable. Sir Joseph Yorke's despatches in State Papers Foreign of Holland contain bulky and verbose memorials from the Dutch as well as his own views of the Anglo-Dutch Gold Coast quarrels. They are specially valuable for the years 1773-1774, and are important as showing the African settlements in European diplomacy. The State Papers Foreign and Foreign Office Papers are also essential for the treaties signed during the period, and for the preceding correspondence.

IN PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.

State Papers Foreign :

Holland, Vols. 534, 535, 538, 539.

542, 543	1772-1774	Sir Joseph Yorke.
<i>Treaty Papers</i> , Vol. 17	1748-1763	France.
<i>Treaties</i> , Vol. 123	1763, Feb. 15	Treaty of Paris, Eng- land, France and Spain.

Foreign Office Papers.

<i>Treaties</i>	F.O. 93, 15-1	1783, Jan. 20	Preliminary articles of Peace.
France	" " 15-2	1783, Sept. 3	Definitive Treaty.
France	" " 26-1	1783, Sept. 2	Preliminary articles of Peace.
Holland	" " 1A	1784, May 20	Treaty of Peace.
"	" " 1B	1788, Apr. 15	Treaty of offensive Alliance between Gt. Britain and Holland.

6. ADMIRALTY PAPERS.

As by Clause XXX of the Act of 1750 the officers in command of His Majesty's ships were empowered to inspect the forts, the despatches sent from such officers to the Admiralty contain valuable information as to the condition of the forts. The series "Captains' Letters" in the Admiralty Papers contains these reports, some of which are also in the Board of Trade Original Correspondence.

For the naval side of the campaign of 1782 the instructions to Captain Shirley and his despatches give the official account.

The instructions to captains charged with convoying vessels to Africa and their reports are also valuable, and there is, among the In Letters of the Secretary to the Admiralty, an important bundle of letters from the Committee of the Company and others entirely concerned with African affairs.

ADMIRALTY LIST, PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.

Captains' Letters :

	Class.	Volume Numbers.	
1750	Ad. 1	1888	From Capt. Howe
1781 & 82	"	2485	" " Shirley
1783	"	2676	" " Wickey
1789-92	"	1988	" " Inglefield
<i>In Letters, Sec. :</i>			
1721-1792	"	3810	" " From the African Company "
<i>Out Letters :</i>			
Secret Orders and Letters	1782	Ad. 2	1340 To Capt. Shirley
Orders and Instructions	1782	"	113 " " Wickey

7. ORDNANCE BOARD PAPERS.

Among the sources of information the Ordnance Board's papers are valuable especially between 1759 and 1763, while Annamaboe fort was being rebuilt. The reports in these records are important as a confirmation of the Company's letters, as they show that the difficulties and dangers of coast life are not only found by officers in the Company's Service.

IN THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE—WAR OFFICE LIST.

			Class.	Volume Number.
Ordnance Board, Minutes . . .	1759-60	W.O.	47	54-56
In Letters, Africa and E. Indies . .	1759-63	„	I	319

8. RECORDS OF PARLIAMENT.

As Parliament continuously took interest in the affairs of the African settlements, the Statutes at Large and the Journals of the Lords and Commons are throughout the period a source of information of which the value is patent.

In addition there are two printed reports of evidence given to a Committee of the House at the beginning of the nineteenth century on conditions of the African settlements which are an extremely valuable, almost a contemporary, source of information.

Statutes at Large.

Lords' Journals. Vols. XXV to XXXVII.

Commons' Journals. Vols. XXI to XLII.

Bills.

Parliamentary Reports. Sess. 1816, VII, B. Report on African Forts.

„ 1820, XII, „ „ „

II. CONTEMPORARY AUTHORITIES

Information on the subject of the English Gold Coast settlements in addition to that found in the sources already described is provided by a number of contemporary writings. The periodical publications of the day, such as the *Annual Register*, and various newspapers and magazines and directories contain information showing African affairs as seen by contemporaries. Among such records the Parliamentary Register and other reports of debates are of especial importance. There are also a number of descriptions of the coast and the forts there, written by travellers or traders which give the records of eye-witnesses

as to coast conditions. Of these a description of the Guinea Coast, written by John Bosman, who was for thirteen years in the Dutch Service, is the most valuable for the purposes of the present sketch, as his account shows the coast from the point of view of one who had long personal experience of residence there. For this reason his account, written at the end of the seventeenth century, is of greater value than that of Snelgrave, which was written in 1732, but is the record of one who visited, but did not live continuously on the coast. The account of the Gold Coast given in John Barbot's *Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea* is chiefly taken from Bosman's account. Next to Bosman's description of the coast and the inhabitants, Meredith's *Account of the Gold Coast*, written in 1812, is of especial value, as Meredith was in the service of the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa, and his account gives detailed information as to the physical condition of the coast, and seems to have been written to show the possibilities of agricultural development there. Others of the Company's servants wrote accounts of the coast. Norris and Dalzell both wrote histories of Dahomey, but Dalzell's was clearly written to show the benefits to the native population of the Slave Trade, and for this reason has to be used with caution. Mungo Park's travels at the end of the century throw light on the hitherto unexplored hinterland of the Gold Coast, but do not add to the knowledge of the coast.

For the question of the machinery of the Company and the organisation and management of the forts by the Committee, the contemporary tracts, pamphlets and treaties on commerce are valuable. Of the mass of eighteenth-century tracts and pamphlets on the African trade, those which are important for the present sketch lie within a distinctly limited period—the early eighteenth-century tracts on African trade were mainly concerned with the rival claims of free traders and those supporting the Royal African Company's claim. These tracts are important for the general arrangements leading to the organisation of 1750, but their main points were recapitulated in the papers laid before Parliament by the Board of Trade in 1749, and they are therefore not of special importance for the history after 1750. A more distinct division comes in the 'eighties of the century—after 1788 the tracts and pamphlets on the African trade are practically entirely concerned with the disputes between Abolitionists and Traders, in which the organisation of

the Company is little discussed. Between 1750 and 1788 the pamphlets on African trade are comparatively few, but all give valuable information as to the condition of the Company's organisation. The question of the adequacy of the Company's organisation for the purposes of developing the trade is fully discussed in these pamphlets. Of the writers of pamphlets a number are anonymous, but John Hippisley and Malachy Postlethwayt are among the well-known pamphleteers. John Hippisley was an officer in the Company's Service, and his essays, published in 1764, contain an interesting expression of the opinion of those in the African Service as to the means necessary for the maintenance of the English settlements.

Among the writers on commerce of the day Malachy Postlethwayt collected considerable information as to the European trade to Africa, and his *Dictionary of Commerce* provides useful additions to the *Dictionnaire Universel de Commerce* of Savaroy des Bruslons, on which it was based. Anderson's *History of Commerce* gives a contemporary chronicle up to 1762 for commercial events which is valuable, as is its continuation in Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*. The fullest outline of the Company's organisation as established in 1750 is given by Adam Smith.

CONTEMPORARY AUTHORITIES.

	DATE.
ANDERSON, A.: History of the Commercial Interests of the British Empire	1764
BARBOT, J.: Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea. (Churchill's Voyages, Vol. 5)	1732
BEAWES, W.: Lex Mercatoria	1761
BOSMAN, W.: A New and Accurate Description of the Coasts of Guinea	1705
DALZELL, A.: History of Dahomey	1793
EDWARDS, B.: History of the West Indies	1793
MACPHERSON, D.: Annals of Commerce, Vols. III & IV	1805
MEREDITH, H.: Account of the Gold Coast	1812
NORRIS, R.: Memoirs of the Reign of Bossa Ahadee	1789
PARK, MUNGO: Travels in the Interior Districts of Africa	1799
POSTLETHWAYT, M.: Dictionary of Commerce (2nd edition)	1774
SAVARY DES BRUSLONS: Dictionnaire Universel de Commerce (3 tom.)	1723
SNELGRAVE, W.: Account of Guinea	1754
SMITH, A.: Wealth of Nations	1776
WADSTROM, C. B.: Essay on Colonisation	1794

PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS.	DATE.
History, Debates and Proceedings of both Houses of Parliament, 1743-1774	1792
Parliamentary Register, 1774-1813	1775, etc.
Parliamentary History, Cobbett's	1806, etc.
CAVENDISH: Debates during the 13th Parliament	1841
Annual Register: Continuous references, also special notices, Vols. 5, 6, 7, 26, 30	1758, etc.
Gentleman's Magazine: Vols. 23, 25, 27, 43, 52, 58, 59, 60	1758, etc.
Grand Magazine: Vol. I	1758
North Briton: No. 35, Jan. 28, 1763	1763
Royal Kalendar: For years 1767-1777	1767, etc.

TRACTS AND PAMPHLETS.

The following press marks are from the British Museum Catalogue:

African Trade: Considerations on the Present Peace Relative to the Colonies and African Trade (104, h. 65)	1763
African Trade: The African Trade, the Great Pillar and Support of the British Plantations (601, i. 6)	1758
African Trade: The National and Private Advantages of the African Trade (T. 806 [3])	1746
African Trade: Treatise on Trade to Africa (104, h. 52)	1772
HIPPISLEY, J.: Essay (T. 1136 [1])	1764
PERSIN: Present State of the British and French Sugar Colonies Considered (104, i. 86)	1740
POSTLETHWAYT, M.: In Honour of the Administration (8245, f. 4)	1758
ROBERTS, J.: State of the British Forts on the Gold Coast (T. 1136)	1778
ROBERTS, J.: Cursory Observations on the African Trade (T. 927 [6])	1778
WEST INDIES: The Alarm Bell. Considerations on the Present Dangerous State of the Sugar Colonies (T. 13 [4])	1749

III. LATER AUTHORITIES

Later works are divided into those directly bearing on the subject and those in part concerned with the subject.

Of monographs on the English settlements on the Gold Coast, apart from guides and descriptive books to which an historical survey is frequently attached, Mr. A. B. Ellis's *History of the Gold Coast*, published in 1893, and Mr. Walton Claridge's two volumes published in 1910 on the *History of the Gold Coast* are the most important. The value of both these works, however, lies rather in the account given by them of the nineteenth-century development during and after the Ashantee wars than

in their treatment of the eighteenth century, which in both cases is brief, and neither Mr. Ellis nor Mr. Claridge describes the organisation of the English establishments.

Of histories of the English settlements in West Africa, Sir Charles Lucas's volume in the *Historical Geography of the British Colonies* series is a valuable survey of European development on the Coast.

For the history of the development of the native kingdoms a *History of the Gold Coast*, written by Rev. C. C. Reindorf, a native pastor of the Basel Mission on the Gold Coast in 1895, contains an interesting account of events on the Coast told by a native. The author describes his work as "based on traditions and historical facts." For native history which is still based on tradition his book has considerable value.

While little has been written about the English settlements on the Gold Coast in the eighteenth century, there is a long list of works on matters bearing on the subject. The Slave Trade has been described among others by Clarkson, Bandinel, Raynal, Benezet and Huene, but not only are these works written to prove their author's point, but they hardly touch the question of the European settlements on the African Coast, and are in general concerned with the capturing of the slaves, their transport and subsequent treatment in the West Indies and America. These books have been found of little value for the present subject, and will not be included among the list of authorities.

For modern descriptions of the natives and native customs, the *Journal of the African Society* has valuable articles, and Miss Kingsley's volumes and those of Mr. A. B. Ellis give accounts of the coast dwellers by writers who had personal acquaintance with them.

Of modern works on the organisation of the European trade settlements, Bonnassieux's book on *Les Grandes Compagnies de Commerce* needs mention, but for the English Company of Merchants is negligible in value, as Bonnassieux asserts that in 1765 the Company ceased to exist (*op. cit.*, p. 95). For the position of the English rivals the volumes by Messieurs Lannoy et Vanderlinden on *L'Histoire de l'Expansion chez les Peuples modernes* are invaluable. The description of the Dutch Company is given in a clear scheme, and the value of the book is increased by frequent references to the authorities on which it is based. It is to be regretted that the volume on French expansion has not yet been published. Mr. Scott's work on English Joint

Stock Companies alludes to the Company of Merchants, but both by date and the nature of the Company it lies outside the scope of his volumes.

The years 1750-1786 were a period of so frequent changes in ministries that to discover the attitude of the leaders in the Home administration to African affairs the biographical sketches of a number of ministers have to be consulted. Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne* is disappointingly barren of references to African affairs, and the lives at present available of Lord George Germaine, Lord North, the Earl of Halifax, the Earl of Dartmouth and other Presidents of the Board of Trade give no place to African concerns. Miss Hotblack's book on *Chatham's Colonial Policy* is an exception to the general rule, containing a valuable chapter on African affairs for which the Company's records have been used. By the time of the younger Pitt the interest in the African trade was centring on the abolition question, and in Professor Holland Rose's *History of Pitt and the National Revival* the question is treated from that point of view.

For the general history of the eighteenth century, of which the subject of the present sketch forms part, Lecky's work is still the indispensable authority.

LATER WORKS.

HISTORIES OF THE GOLD COAST.

	DATE.
CLARIDGE, W.: History of the Gold Coast and Ashantee (2 Vols.)	1915
ELLIS, A. B.: History of the Gold Coast of West Africa	1893
REINDORF, C. C.: History of the Gold Coast and Asiante	Basel, 1895

WORKS OF WHICH A PART REFERS TO THE SUBJECT.

BONNASSIEUX, P.: Les Grandes Compagnies de Commerce	Paris, 1892
CRUICKSHANK, B.: Eighteen Years on the Gold Coast	1863
HOTBLACK, K.: Chatham's Colonial Policy	1917
JOHNSTON, H.: Colonisation of Africa by Alien Races	1913
JOURNAL OF THE AFRICAN SOCIETY: Nos. 12, 13, 27, 28, 33, 40, 50, 52, 55, 59	1904, etc.
LUCAS, C. P.: West Africa. Historical Geography of the British Colonies	1899
LANNON and VANDERLINDEN: Histoire de l'Expansion chez les Peuples modernes	Bruxelles
Tom. 1, Portugal et Espagne	1907
Tom. 2, Neulande et Danemark	1911

- MOCKLER-FERRYMAN: *British West Africa* 1893
 [Is not in the British Museum, but there is a copy in
 the Colonial Institute Library.]
 PEYTRAUD, L.: *L'Esclavage aux Antilles Françaises* . . . 1897

IV. OTHER WORKS

- ATCHLEY, C.: *West Indies: Historical Geography of the
 British Colonies, II* 1905
 BEER, G. L.: *The Old Colonial System* 1912
 BEER, G. L.: *British Colonial Policy* 1907
 BLOK, P.: *History of the People of the Netherlands* . . 1895
 CARR, C. T.: *Select Charters of Trading Companies*
 (Selden Society, Vol. 28). 1913
 CORBETT, J.: *England in the Seven Years' War* 1907
 CAUSTON and KEANE: *Early Chartered Companies* . . . 1896
 CLOWES: *History of the Royal Navy (Vols. III & IV,
 1788-89)*.
 CUNNINGHAM, W.: *Growth of English Industry and Com-
 merce* 1905
 DAUBIGNY, E.: *Choiseul et la France d'Outre-Mer* . . . 1892
 DUBOIS, W. P.: *The Negro* 1915
 DENNETT, R. E.: *At the Back of the Blackman's Mind* . . 1906
 EGERTON, H. E.: *British Colonial Policy* 1913
 ELLIS, A. B.: *Land of Fetish* 1883
 ELLIS, A. B.: *West African Sketches* 1881
 ELLIS, A. B.: *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold
 Coast* 1887
 FITZMAURICE: *Life of Shelburne (3 Vols.)* 1875-1876
 GRANT and MUNRO: *Introductions to Acts of the Privy
 Council Colonial* 1908-1912
 HERTZ, G. B.: *The Old Colonial System* 1904
 HERTZ, G. B.: *British Imperialism in the Eighteenth
 Century* 1908
 HERBERTSON and HOWARTH: *Oxford Survey of the British
 Empire, Vol. III, Africa* 1914
 HOTBLACK, K.: *The Peace of Paris (Alexander Prize
 Essay, 1907)*.
 HAYFORD, C.: *Gold Coast Native Institutions* 1903
 HAKLUYT, R.: *Principal Navigations: (Maclehose, VI and
 VII)* 1903-1905
 KINGSLEY, M.: *West African Studies* 1901
 KINGSLEY, M.: *Travels in West Africa* 1897
 KELTIE, J. S.: *Partition of Africa* 1895
 LECKY, W.: *History of England in the Eighteenth Cen-
 tury* 1878
 LEROY-BEAULIEU, P.: *De la Colonisation chez les Peuples
 modernes* Paris, 1891
 LEVI, L.: *History of British Commerce* 1872
 LAVISSE: *Histoire de France* Paris, 1910, etc.

LAVISSE and RAMBAUD : <i>Histoire Générale</i>	Paris, 1901
MAHAN, A. T. : <i>Influence of Sea Power on History</i>	1890
MAY, T. ERSKINE : <i>Constitutional History of England</i>	1912
PITMAN, F. W. : <i>The Development of the West Indies</i> (Yale Historical Publications, 4)	1917
ROSE, J. H. : <i>Pitt and National Revival</i>	1911
SCOTT, W. R. : <i>Constitution and Finance of English,</i> <i>Scotch and Irish Joint Stock Companies to 1720</i>	1910-1912
THACKERAY, F. : <i>History of W. Pitt (2 vols.)</i>	1827
WHITWORTH, C. : <i>Public Accounts of Services and Grants</i>	1771
WHITWORTH, C. : <i>Collection of Supplies</i>	1765
WILLIAMS, B. : <i>Life of William Pitt</i>	1913
ZIMMERMAN, A. : <i>Die Europäischen Kolonien</i>	Berlin, 1898
ZOOK, G. F. : <i>Company of Royal Adventurers Trading to</i> <i>Africa</i>	1919

ON MATERIALS.

ANDREWS, C. M. : <i>Guide to Materials for American History</i> <i>to 1783 in the Public Record Office</i>	1912
DAVENPORT : <i>Material for English Diplomatic History,</i> <i>1709-1783 (18th Report, Hist. MSS. Commission)</i>	1917
JENKINSON, H. : <i>The Records of the English African Com-</i> <i>panies. Transactions of the Royal Hist. Society, Series</i> <i>III, Vol. VI</i>	1912
NEWTON, A. P. : <i>The Papers of the African Company</i>	1914

V. MAPS, PLANS, AND SKETCHES

There is a large number of contemporary maps of the Gold Coast, of which the British Museum has an excellent collection. Of these the works of the French Geographer, le Sieur d'Anville, were generally accepted as the model on which others based their maps.¹

There are also, in Barbot's description of Guinea, illustrations which show the general appearance of the Coast from the sea, and among the Additional MSS. there are some beautifully drawn Dutch maps and views of the Dutch forts, which give a less flattering idea of Elmina than might be gathered from travellers' accounts.

Among the Colonial Office Papers there is a series of plans and reports of the English forts made by an Ordnance Officer in 1756-7.

¹ Major Rennel, editor of *Geographical Notes*, attached to 1799 edition of Mungo Park's *Travels*, says: "We must regard the geography of Monsieur d'Anville as the most perfect of all, previous to the enquiries made by the African Association."

Other plans may be found in the British Museum in a volume of *Drafts of Guinea*, by a Surveyor of the Royal African Company.

IN THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.

C.O. 267/11. Plans of the Gold Coast Forts with the Surveyor's Report. Drawn up by Justley Watson, 1756-7.

IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

ANVILLE : Carte particulière de la Guinée	1729
ANVILLE : Guinée entre Sierra Leone et le passage de la Ligne avec une carte particulière du Côte d'Or	1775
ANVILLE : Afrique par le Sieur d'Anville (4 feuilles)	1749
BENNETT, R. : Africa according to the Sieur d'Anville	1760
BOULTON, S. : Africa enlarged from d'Anville's map	1787
HINTON, J. : Map of Coast of Africa	1757
SCHNEIDER and WEIGEL : Afrika entwerfen in 1794.	
SMITH, W. : Thirty Different Drafts of Guinea	1740
SMITH, W. : A new and correct Map of the Coast of Africa	1744
VAUGONDY, R. : L'Afrique	1767
<i>Africa : West Coast :</i>	
Map for M. Postlethwayt's Dictionary of Commerce—With Explanatory Notes of all the Sorts and Settlements	1753
A New and Accurate Map of the European Settlements on the Coast of Africa	1770
A New and Accurate Chart of the Coast of Africa comprehending the chief European Settlements	1780
<i>Additional MSS. 33976 :</i>	
Maps by Joan Vingboons.	



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